

Serial No. 10/615,205
Amendment Dated May 12, 2004
Reply to Office Action of February 24, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

A substitute declaration signed by John A. Duran is enclosed. Claim 1 has been rejected as anticipated by Polzin et al.

In Polzin et al., body 92 is installed on the outer pole 30 using one-way detent engaging members 94. These members 94 are used only to attach body 92 to pole 30, no other reason. As a next step, locking mechanism 34 is threaded on body 92 by mating threads 98 and 110. Afterwards, the inner pole 32 is inserted through the opening of body 92 and locking mechanism 34. After assembling the end parts on the inner pole 32, it can no longer be removed.

The inner pole 32 can be retracted and stowed in the outer pole 30. By rotating locking mechanism 34 (the sleeve), the inner pole 32 is fixated to the outer pole 30 in two ways. First, the hexagon shape of the outer pole 30 offers the anti-rotation necessary to fix the two poles rotatably. Second, locking mechanism 34 (sleeve) is rotated. It travels axially relative to body 92 (fixed to outer pole 30) and forces the tapered surface 124 to clamp down on the clamping flange 96. As the operation proceeds, the surface 102 clamps down on the inner pole 32.

In summary, Polzin et al. is a friction type holding system and has no relation to the mechanism claimed. Friction-type systems do not have large load carrying capacity and are usually used for non-critical applications- e.g. painting brush holders, window cleaning etc.

The intermediate position of the locking means in claim 1 (the pawls) have been created to allow a one-person operation of the strut. When the strut 12 is extended, it automatically locks in the open position. In applicant's claimed strut, releasing the sleeve 34 keeps the locking pucks 43 in a position to support static downward load. They do not move in any direction

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during this operation. As the strut 12 is further extended, the pucks 43 are moved out of the way to allow retraction of the sleeve 34.

There are thus no locking means forced radially outwardly in Polzin et al. Claim 1 is thus not anticipated by Polzin et al.

Claims 1 to 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. The indefiniteness of claims 1 and 6 have been corrected. The objection to claims 1 to 11 has also been corrected and the disclosure has been amended as requested. The Tibussek and Lo patents have been considered, and are not pertinent to the claims as amended. The indicated allowance of claims 2 to 11 is appreciated. By this amendment, all claims should now be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, now or in the future, or credit any overpayment to Account No. 50-2638.

Respectfully submitted,

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